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5 September 1956

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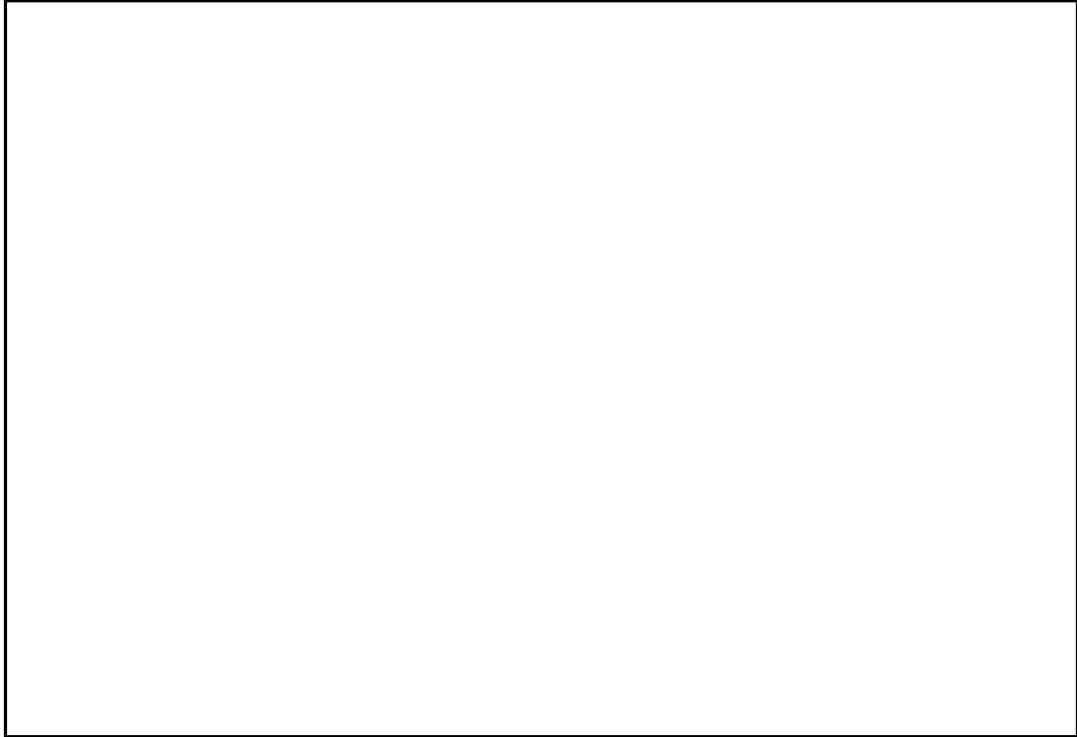
# CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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State Dept. review completed

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Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

CONTENTS

1. BRITISH BELIEVE EARLY MILITARY ACTION NECESSARY  
ON SUEZ [REDACTED]

25X1A

2. ITALY MAY MAKE DEMARCHE TO NASR URGING CAUTION  
ON SUEZ ISSUE [REDACTED]

25X1A

25X1

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION

[REDACTED]  
25X1A

5 Sept 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 2

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

**1. BRITISH BELIEVE EARLY MILITARY ACTION  
NECESSARY ON SUEZ**

25X1A

[REDACTED] Top British government officials believe military action will be necessary in the Suez situation. They are not prepared, moreover, to delay "appreciably" in forcing a showdown, according to the American embassy in London.

The British doubt that Nasr can be persuaded to accept any adequate international arrangement to operate the canal that would demonstrate that he has been prevented from making good his seizure. They consider the prospects good for swift success in a military operation confined to Egypt and believe such action would be welcomed in the Middle East by Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Government officials tend to ignore the increasing strength of public opposition to the use of military force, apparently in the belief that the current situation is a historic turning point for Britain requiring that the government take a forceful course regardless of the consequences.

**Comment**

While a number of Arab leaders would greet Nasr's downfall with private satisfaction, they would find a concomitant increase of British power and prestige unwelcome.

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25X1A

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**2. ITALY MAY MAKE DEMARCHE TO NASR URGING  
CAUTION ON SUEZ ISSUE**

25X1A

Premier Segni told Ambassador Luce on 1 September that Italy wishes to make a demarche to Nasr on 5 or 6 September urging him to give careful consideration to the proposal on Suez being presented by the committee of five. Segni said he was concerned that Nasr might underestimate the united determination of the 18 powers. He fears that the British-French menace of force may make Nasr either reject the committee's proposals at once or draw out discussions for a long time, thereby running the risk that incidents at the canal or in Egypt would provide an excuse for military action.

**Comment**

The suggested demarche would probably have little influence on Nasr's position. Segni's proposal springs from Italy's desire to raise its prestige by active participation in the Suez affair.

5 Sept 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 4

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

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Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6

**THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION**  
**(Information as of 1700, 4 September)**

Nothing of significance to report.

5 Sept 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 7

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002700230001-6